



**EARTH DAY
2008**
Congresswoman
Lois Capps
23rd Congressional
District of California



Nowhere is it more appropriate to observe Earth Day than here on the Central and South Coast, one of the most beautiful places in America. Earth Day holds particular significance for our community, because the idea was conceived after Senator Gaylord Nelson visited Santa Barbara to witness the devastating effects of the 1969 oil spill.

We have come a long way in the past 38 years. Our oceans, rivers, and lakes are cleaner, and our parks and open spaces are vaster. Yet much remains to be done. We need to recommit ourselves to using renewable energy, to keeping our air and drinking water clean and safe, and to protecting our natural resources from excessive development.

As we commemorate Earth Day, I want to take this opportunity to underscore my commitment to protecting our natural resources and inform you of my most recent actions in Congress.

Stopping Global Warming and Achieving Energy Independence

Global warming is the greatest environmental challenge of our time. It threatens everything that we care about in the world, including our environment, public health and safety, and our future economic prosperity. According to scientists, the Earth is heating up faster than any time in history and human activity is responsible. The good news is we know how to fix this problem. But we must act soon. That's why I have cosponsored the *Safe Climate Act*. This bill sets targets for reducing global warming pollution below the danger point. The targets would be achieved through a flexible, economy-wide cap-and-trade system.

In order to curb the potentially catastrophic effects of global warming, I believe we must also aggressively reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and pursue clean sources of energy. I recently supported the Energy Independence and Security Act, which the President signed into law. This bill increases the fuel efficiency standards for automobiles for the first time in 32 years. It also takes groundbreaking steps to boost the production of American-grown biofuels, like cellulosic ethanol, and create a new "green jobs" training program to prepare workers in industries such as wind, solar, and green building. In the coming months, I'll continue to support sensible energy policies, including adopting a national Renewable Electricity Standard to require the use of more renewable energy in producing electricity and enacting permanent tax credits for wind, solar and other clean technologies.

How to Contact Me:

Washington, DC Office

1110 Longworth H.O.B.

Washington, DC

20515

(202) 225-3601

www.house.gov/capps

Santa Barbara Office

101 W. Anapamu St., Ste. C

Santa Barbara, CA

93101

(805) 730-1710

San Luis Obispo Office

1411 Marsh St., #205

San Luis Obispo, CA

93401

(805) 546-8348

Ventura County Office

2675 N. Ventura Rd., #105

Port Hueneme, CA

93041

(805) 985-6807

www.house.gov/writerep

Preserving Our Public Lands

In 2006, a provision was slipped into the Defense Authorization bill that was intended to allow a lucrative private hunting operation on Santa Rosa Island (part of the Channel Islands National Park) to continue indefinitely, and consequently continue to restrict public access to the National Park. Last year, Senators Feinstein and Boxer and I successfully repealed this ill-advised provision. This will mean unrestricted year-round public access to the island and guarantee protection for island resources.

More than ever, the pressures of development along our coast threaten to impair watersheds, impact wildlife habitat and cause irreparable damage to the fragile coastal ecology. That's why I have introduced legislation to establish the *Coastal Estuarine and Land Conservation Program*. This legislation will protect some of California's most sensitive coastal ecosystems by allowing the state to acquire land or easements that have conservation, recreation, or ecological values threatened by development. Not only will this legislation protect our coastal areas and the wildlife they support, but it will also sustain the health of our communities and the quality of life we cherish.

Working with county officials and environmental groups, I have secured federal funds to complete the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project. The massive build-up of sediment behind the dam is causing numerous environmental problems, including beach erosion and threats to steelhead trout. This funding will help ensure that the complete removal of the dam is carried out in a safe and environmentally sound manner. Removing Matilija Dam will yield enormous ecological and economic benefits to the Central and South Coasts.

Protecting Our Coastlines and Oceans

I have introduced the *California Ocean and Coastal Protection Act* to permanently ban new oil and gas development off California's coast. My legislation would also prohibit a costly, harmful and unnecessary 'inventory' of oil and gas resources from being conducted off California's coast. While we have been well served by a ban on new drilling off California for over two decades, these protections are increasingly threatened. Enacting legislation that provides permanent protection is essential to ensuring our economically and environmentally important coastline is never opened to new drilling.

Last year the State Lands Commission and Coastal Commission agreed with me by rejecting BHP Billiton's dirty and dangerous Cabrillo Port LNG facility off our coast. I opposed this LNG project because it would have degraded our environment and harmed our state's coastal resources. Specifically, it would have resulted in more air pollution, contributed to global warming, negatively impacted water quality, and endangered marine wildlife in the Santa Barbara Channel. I'll continue to urge federal and state officials to block harmful and ill-conceived LNG projects off our coast from going forward.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I take my job of protecting our oceans and coastlines seriously. That's why I recently introduced legislation to establish new grant programs that will help coastal states promote environmentally-friendly offshore renewable energy projects and plan for the impacts of global warming, such as sea level rise. I'll also continue to actively seek increased funding to support our local environmental jewels, such as the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Morro Bay National Estuary. And I will continue to push for critical water quality monitoring programs to ensure that our beaches are clean and safe. Finally, I'll continue to secure federal funding for the *Bay-Watershed Education and Training Program*, a valuable ocean conservation program that teaches local students more about protecting our marine environment.